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## Get Away Special: Microgravity Research Team

Getaway Special Team

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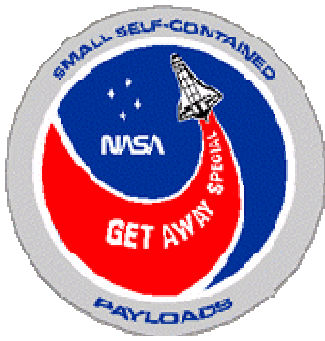
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# Get Away Special

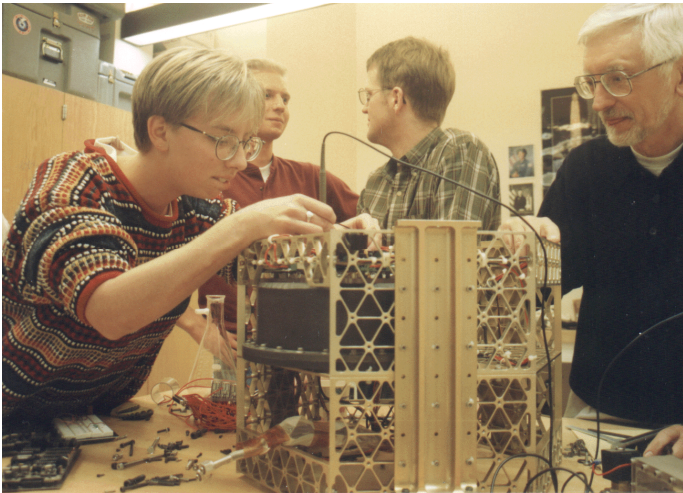
Microgravity Research Team

*Utah State University*

The **Microgravity Research Team (MRT)**, formerly known as the Get Away Special (GAS) team, is an undergraduate and graduate program inviting students of all disciplines to engage in hands-on research and design experience. Team members generate community interest in space exploration while pioneering ideas in inner- and outer-space exploration.

**1976:** The team was first developed in October 1976, when R. Gilbert Moore, a then Morton executive and former USU professor, attended a conference where NASA administrators announced the development of a new opportunity for space research aboard the newly designed space shuttle. Moore stood up in the middle of the presenter's speech and wrote a check from his own money for the first Get Away Special (GAS) payload reservation. He donated the payload to USU, beginning the GAS program.

**With the first experiment with NASA, GAS created the guidelines which are still in use for everyone to understand payload flight requirements.**



**The GAS team was the first group of people outside of NASA to directly telephone the International Space Station and speak to an astronaut onboard. The NASA astronaut was Don Pettit, who was also previously and adjunct professor at USU.**

**1982:** The team flew the first Get Away Special experiment in the world named G-001, in 1982, on the Space Shuttle Columbia.

**1984:** Developed "Space Packs" which allowed multiple schools to participate in one payload. This increased the opportunity for students to fly experiments in space.



The G001 team: (L to R, kneeling) sponsors Gilbert Moore and Phyllis Moore; USU Professor Rex Megill; (standing) Thiokol Corporation advisor Donald Cook; students Amber Dalley, Russ Laher, Terrance Thomas, David Yoel, James Elwell, Bruce Moore, Walt Moore, Steven Walker, and Kelly Hunt; Thiokol advisors Lynn Hankins and Gladysce O'Dell.

**The GAS team has brought space into K-12 classrooms by sending, not only the team's experiments, but also those developed by students from local schools.**

**1994:** Space popcorn was first initiated by the Get Away Special program in September 1994 as part of an educational outreach program specifically engineered toward elementary education to answer the question, Does popcorn exposed to micro-gravity change? Space popcorn took flight aboard G-254 the 8th of September 1994. Across the nation elementary students get to test their knowledge in participating in hands-on research.

**2003:** Nibley Elementary became a part of the Get Away Special Outreach program in December 2003. The hands-on experiment these students worked on was named affectionately named "Gooney."

The GAS program was terminated due to the Columbia Disaster. NASA decided to concentrate on using their remaining shuttle missions to completing the International Space Station oppose to sending student experiments into space.

**2005:** The Microgravity Research Team continued to develop experiments for space. The team pursued avenues such as NASA's Microgravity University and the Cal-Poly Cubesat program.

**The Future:** Projects for the future include research onboard and outside of the International Space Station, small satellite experiments deployed from orbital rockets, and experiments on the microgravity research airplane.

For almost three decades USU has been the leading school in the space shuttle program. NASA, other government agencies, and aerospace industrial organizations are well aware of this distinction. GAS has become known as one of the world's premier student space research teams, and several GAS students have been recruited by aerospace industries. The team has contributed immensely to maintain Utah State University's sterling reputation as the university that has flown more experiments into space than any other university in the world.